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Commission on Population and Development

Fifty-first session

9–13 April 2018

Item 3 of the provisional agenda¹

General Debate 3 (a): Actions for the further implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development at the global, regional and national levels

3 (b): Sustainable cities, human mobility and international migration

Statement submitted by International Young Professionals Foundation, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council² and The Organization for Poverty Alleviation and Development

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

¹ E/CN.9/2018/1.

² The present statement is issued without formal editing.



Statement

Disasters, wars, globalisation and international trade have increased mobility of people across the globe. Building sustainable cities with and for immigrants paves the way to achieving sustainable development for all humankind.

Urban sustainability must take into consideration and overcome the contemporary challenges about concentration of economic activity, innovation and job creation, the potential for social transformation, high levels of concentration of culture, people, infrastructure and buildings. Cities are not omnipotent when it comes to reducing or mitigating the side effects of those phenomena; governments have to play a leading role in creating and overseeing the infrastructure for multi-sector approach to urban sustainability.

Sustainable cities are often widely referred to as “cities of the rich” but this should not be the case. A place for people with various job experiences and professional qualifications is available. To that extent, the diverse background of immigrants could be an important economic stimulus. Nevertheless, there are a wide range of governmental and legal barriers, lengthy procedures, and lack of other financial incentives that discourage immigrants from engaging in economic activity. As employees, as well as job providers, immigrants could contribute to overcoming poverty in cities, reducing social disparities and increasing overall welfare. Avoiding discrimination in hiring, for example, by preferring a permanent resident or a citizen over an equally qualified job candidate with an immigrant profile, or creating facilities for entrepreneurship (incubating or accelerating start-ups, co-working places, venture capital) might benefit cities. Other entities in the urban environment can also guard against problems. The industry, NGOs, universities and academics are among key stakeholders in delivering urban sustainability infrastructure.

The cultural perspectives of immigrants should also be explored for the benefit of a sustainable city. Even though immigrants come from all over the world, their being “different” from the native-born population often places them at the margin of the society, or even worse, encapsulates them in a ghetto where they are surrounded by other immigrants, often of the same place or region of origin. Breaking these borders could be facilitated by governments. Local city authorities in cooperation with governments could encourage and support more cultural events that are inclusive of immigrants and enable them to demonstrate their culture. Examples include festivals, gatherings over a meal, art exhibitions, music and dance performances, workshops to make artefacts, even just storytelling in front of people from the neighbourhood. This is not a costly effort; moreover, cultural activities are consolidating the whole community. When the immigrants demonstrate their peaceful and interesting culture in an immersive, highly engaging way, there is a lasting sense of intriguing openness that is a key enabler in community-immigrants’ relations ever after.

Urban sustainability will benefit from immigrants and the diversity of stakeholders in the community. Once all facilities in a city are established in coordination with the government — but not funded with public funds solely — the cross-proliferation of ideas will be delivered. Start-up visas given to entrepreneurial immigrants can be complemented with business development and research spaces that enable the establishment of cooperatives and social enterprises in the city. These more democratic forms of business represent a substantial potential for urban transformation and need to be incentivized. For instance, easier procedures for starting a business should be promoted. The sharing of technology, knowledge and finance should be fostered by governments as well as supporting measures for engaging immigrants in collaborative business through a multi-actor approach in urban sustainability.



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Statement submitted by World Youth Alliance, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council²

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

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Statement

The World Youth Alliance is a global coalition of young people dedicated to the promotion and defence of human dignity in policy and culture and building solidarity between young people in developing and developed countries. With over 200,000 young people as members in more than 130 countries, the organization welcomes the opportunity to address the Commission on the theme of sustainable cities, human mobility and international migration.

It is essential to keep people at the centre of development, including as many move to cities. Urbanization creates both challenges and opportunities for development. Sustainable cities require authentic development — development that empowers people to be participants in their communities and bring about sustainability. The elements of SDG 16, “Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels”, are key to achieving this. Societies which are just and whose institutions are accountable are ones that ensure every person has access on an equal basis to the fundamental forms of capital.

One way to understand Goal 16 is providing universal access to various forms of capital. According to Michael Fairbanks, former advisor to President Paul Kagame of Rwanda, there are seven forms of capital to which people need access. These are: natural endowments such as location, subsoil assets, forests, beaches, and climate; the financial resources of a nation, such as savings and international reserves; humanly made capital, such as buildings, bridges, roads, and telecommunications assets; institutional capital, such as legal protections of tangible and intangible property, efficient government departments, and firms that maximize value to shareholders and compensate and train workers; knowledge resources, such as international patents, and university and think tank capacities; human capital, which represents skills, insights and capabilities; and culture capital, which means not only the explicit articulations of culture like music, language, and ritualistic tradition, but also attitudes and values that are linked to innovation.

Sustainable cities require good stewardship of all these forms of capital. Cities are loci for government services that provide job opportunities and cultural services. They also have the authority to administer civil registrations. Locally-led initiatives, comprehensible regulations, and appropriate infrastructure create conditions in which people drive development. Authentic development always focuses on equipping and empowering people.

In cities where corruption is widespread, the poor often cannot afford to exercise their rights. Those with inadequate or overbearing regulations make it impossible to start new enterprises, often leading to concentration of power and wealth. A lack of good infrastructure inhibits successful entrepreneurship. And the poor and vulnerable will suffer the most due to these problems.

However, cities and countries that invest in just and accountable institutions and good infrastructure management can bring about lasting change. Eliminating bribery puts more people on an equal footing. Regulatory schemes that are reasonable and intelligible to the ordinary person can protect resources from misuse while guaranteeing access to those resources by anyone with a good idea and the willingness to work for it. Creating systems that are just and accountable will increase their use by those most likely to be excluded. This is essential to addressing the poverty and ensuring that cities are truly sustainable and achieve authentic development for all members of the community.

People who are empowered have the ability to make free decisions about where to live. Human mobility should be a choice, not a condition for living. Education, SDG 4, is also a key enabler and ensures that everyone has equal opportunities and the ability to seize new opportunities, wherever they may be. Quality education must be available to all on an equal basis and should flow from an authentic understanding of the human person, and foster respect for self and others in solidarity. The primary responsibility of education rests on the parents and it is the obligation of the State to support them in this role.

World Youth Alliance has developed a curriculum that can support children in all aspects of their studies through a focus on self-understanding and personal development. The Human Dignity Curriculum (HDC) teaches children about human dignity: that every human being has it, and should therefore be respected. It also teaches children that, regardless of their circumstances, they have the potential to be excellent, to develop their gifts, and to use these gifts for the common good. The HDC is culturally sensitive and encourages parental involvement.

Young people who understand human dignity are not only prepared to make responsible personal decisions, but to contribute to their communities and to treat others with respect in their families, peer groups, and communities, including in their personal relationships. This is the education that truly supports sustainable development. It fosters the peaceful and thriving communities, creating the conditions where people are able to move out of desire rather than need.

International migration can raise challenges and opportunities for development, for migrants as well as their countries of origin, transit, and destination. It is important to achieve authentic development, which is a process that takes place at all levels of society, creating a social, political, and economic environment that allows persons to reach their full physical, spiritual, mental, and emotional potential in a way that reflects and respects the values of each distinct culture.

States have the responsibility to maintain peace and security in a transparent manner and have the right to regulate migration. Where States do regulate migration, they must do so in accordance with their national and international obligations, and must always protect the human dignity of all migrants, in particular refugees, asylum seekers, and internally displaced persons.

As young people, we are especially concerned about the protection of minors in migration flows. Minors are vulnerable to exploitation, trafficking, abuse, and radicalization, especially in the case of unaccompanied minors. We must prioritize the protection of minors to prevent these abuses through education to enable them to identify and report potentially dangerous situations and nurture better decision-making capacity while ensuring more stringent laws to support youth affected by abuse.

Individuals, society, governments, and institutions need to work in solidarity to foster the conditions such as freedom, peace, and security that lead to development. World Youth Alliance asks the Commission to ensure that efforts for sustainability are grounded in the human person and human dignity with a focus on empowering people through investing in human capital and education. We stand ready to work with you to achieve this.



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3 (b): Sustainable cities, human mobility and international migration

Statement submitted by Federation for Women and Family Planning, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council²

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

¹ E/CN.9/2018/1.

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Statement

The Federation for Women and Family Planning with its partners and allies from Central and Eastern Europe welcomes the theme of fifty-first session of the Commission on Population and Development: "Sustainable cities, human mobility and international migration".

In the world's rapidly growing urban spaces, international migrants represent a critical mass. We would like to highlight the issue of limited access to sexual and reproductive health and rights experienced by migrant women, impacting their personal freedom, mobility, and bodily autonomy. In this regard, we have seen an increase in humanitarian needs and a changing humanitarian aid context in recent years. These humanitarian crises strongly intensify sexual and reproductive health-related challenges. The World Humanitarian Summit last year, generated a momentum on humanitarian issues and resulted in important pledges by donors, European institutions and other stakeholders in terms of funding allocations and priorities, including on transcending humanitarian-development divides and the empowerment and protection of women and girls in crises. Nevertheless, there is now a danger for these commitments to remain words on paper, and monitoring and accountability in the coming years will be crucial to ensure change. Hence, we count on the Commission's bold leadership and support in urging donor institutions to follow up on their pledges.

We welcome the references made in the Secretary-General's report (E/CN.9/2017/3) to urbanization and population mobility, HABITAT III — the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development and the high-level plenary meeting on addressing large movements of refugees and migrants as well as the centrality of population dynamics to Sustainable Development.

There are over 125 million people in need of humanitarian assistance, a fivefold increase from only a decade ago. Of some 100 million people who were targeted in 2015 with humanitarian aid, an estimated 26 million are women and girls of reproductive age. There is urgent need to answer to their specific sexual and reproductive health needs. Amidst the complex and varied contexts of humanitarian settings, access to services such as family planning, abortion, and emergency obstetric care, can too easily be compromised or denied. Policy barriers, failed health systems, a lack of effective interventions, and other socio-cultural and economic factors may all contribute to inadequate realization of sexual and reproductive rights in such settings. For many migrant women, the fundamental right to access public health services such as sexual and reproductive health information and services is often limited or withheld completely. Globally, the unmet need for contraception and limited access to safe and legal abortion severely limits and violates migrant women's human rights, specifically their sexual and reproductive health and rights.

Women and girls make up about half of all international migrants. Women migrant workers are often restricted to low-paying jobs in poor working conditions and may be at high risk of abuse and discrimination on the grounds of gender, race, migration status, and other factors. Bilateral agreements tend to be gender-blind, failing to take account of gender-specific issues, like sexual and reproductive health concerns. Domestic work is a particularly dramatic situation where women are isolated and sometimes abused, with no benefits or recourse. The many risks migrant women face in seeking and engaging in work are often accompanied by little to no additional benefits and a lack of access to sexual and reproductive health services.

As an example, thousands of Romanian women have left their homes to work in greenhouses and fields in other counties where they face human rights and labour rights violations, including sexual, physical and psychological violence.

The organization is determined to focus attention on strengthening the language on migration and its connections to the realization of women's sexual and reproductive health and rights in the negotiations on the special theme. The organization is also encouraged by the strong support extended to the protection of human rights of migrants and integration of young people, particularly young migrants.

Therefore, we call on the Commission on Population and Development to:

- Work towards accelerating the implementation of all sexual and reproductive health- and rights-related commitments under the 2030 Agenda and ensure that information and services are accessible, affordable, confidential, and high-quality for all women regardless of their nationality, ethnicity, age, religion, immigration or any other status;
- Ensure the provision of comprehensive sexual and reproductive health information and services at all phases of the migration cycle and facilitate the establishment of linkages and referral networks with migrant-friendly trained healthcare providers;
- Recognize migrant women as active agents in the development of sustainable cities, entitled to their full human rights, including access to sexual and reproductive health and rights;
- Respect, protect, and fulfil the sexual and reproductive rights of women in all their diversities and prioritize women's universal human rights especially to strengthen the sustainability of global cities and contribute to the wellbeing of migrant women worldwide;
- Ensure access to safe and legal abortion services for all women, as well as the full range of voluntary contraceptive options, including emergency contraception. It is also important to ensure that these services are youth friendly, affordable, accessible, acceptable, and of the highest quality.



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Statement submitted by Priests for Life, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council²

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Statement

Sustainable cities, human mobility and international migration

Priests for Life works to ensure that human dignity and the fundamental right to life for all are respected during all stages of life from conception to natural death. The movement of people, whether by choice, conflict or crisis, requires global commitment to ensure that safety, human dignity and human rights are protected at all times during transit, receiving, relocation, or return to the home country.

Dignity of the human person

Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development pledged that “no one will be left behind” and recognized that “the dignity of the human person is fundamental”. Its vision of the world includes “a world of universal respect for human rights and human dignity, the rule of law, justice, equality and non-discrimination; of respect for race, ethnicity and cultural diversity; and of equal opportunity permitting the full realization of human potential and contributing to shared prosperity. A world which invests in its children and in which every child grows up free from violence and exploitation. A world in which every woman and girl enjoys full gender equality and all legal, social and economic barriers to their empowerment have been removed”.

This noble concept for the world is one which Priests for Life believes needs to guide discussion and action in regard to sustainable cities, human mobility and international migration. The movement of individuals, families and communities varies by motivation but the desire for safety, security and improved well-being are universal. The challenges for the global community to provide not just for their immediate basic needs but to ensure a future that allows individuals and families to not only survive but to thrive requires unprecedented agreement and action that always respects human dignity and the right to life of all.

Universal respect for human rights and human dignity does not allow subjective opinions to determine whose life is worth living and whose life should be protected from acts of violence and exploitation. All human beings deserve protection and respect during all stages of life from conception to natural death.

Respect for the right to life

Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights states “... every human being has the inherent right to life. This right shall be protected by law. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his life”. The many challenges presented by international migration have at their core the need to protect the right to life.

Respect for the right to life of all is most urgent as transportation methods for migration and exodus from conflict and crisis can be treacherous and deadly as the world has tragically witnessed.

The intrinsic dignity of life is the foundation of human rights. Life is not just for the privileged, the perfect and the planned, but extends to all members of the human family during all stages of life, including children alive but not yet born.

Protecting children

The New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants adopted by heads of state and governments and high representatives affirms that during responses to large movements of refugees and migrants the “human rights and fundamental freedoms of all refugee and migrant children” will be protected and that “regardless of their status” States will give primary “consideration at all times to the best interests of the child”.

Member States also affirmed that they will “comply with our obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child”. Article 2 of the Convention instructs State Parties to “respect and ensure the rights set forth in the present Convention to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child’s or his or her parent’s or legal guardian’s race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status”.

Priests for Life observes that the Convention on the Rights of the Child reminds us in the Preamble that “... the child, by reason of his physical and mental immaturity, needs special safeguards and care, including appropriate legal protection, before as well as after birth”.

Protection of children before birth is practiced by a majority of Member states that restrict access to abortion. Abortion negates a child’s right to life and is clearly not in “the best interest of the child” as governments promised in the New York Declaration.

Priests for Life believes that the rights of every child residing in a country, whether a citizen or not, should be respected regardless of his or her stage of development, nationality or the migration status of her or his mother.

Protection of the family

The need to protect the family and enable it to function as the core foundation of society is critical during movements of people. It is through the family that basic needs of food, water, shelter and clothing are most often provided. Equally important, the family provides the love, care and nurturing that uplifts its members helping them to endure and survive the difficulties and trials of migration. The family shares religious beliefs which give hope to its members during difficulty.

When the family is disrupted, individual members suffer, especially its most vulnerable members. The separation of children from their family and unescorted minors require special attention to reunite families and to ensure that children are protected from neglect and abuse, especially from the scourge of human trafficking, during the separation.

Providing health care

Access to life-affirming health care is needed by all, especially the most vulnerable — pregnant women, children, the elderly and the disabled. Initiatives that seek the elimination of individuals who may be considered “inconvenient” or a “burden” or who require extra care must always be opposed.

Priest for Life believes that no individual member of the family ought to be selectively marked as expendable — regardless of disability, disease, age, condition of dependency or stage of development. All members of the family are deserving of protection.

Women and girls in migration need measures to ensure their safety and to meet their unique needs. Pregnant women and girls require access to prenatal care, nutritious food, assisted childbirth and postnatal care to reduce mortality and to promote the health and well-being of both.

The New Urban Agenda adopted by the General Assembly commits in paragraph 55 to “health-care services, including universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services to reduce newborn child and maternal mortality”.

Priests for Life is concerned that the provision of health care to reduce newborn, child and maternal mortality could be changed by inclusion of access to abortion —

an act that leads to the mortality of children during their most vulnerable stage — and opposes attempts to include access to abortion in maternal or reproductive health programmes.

Faith-based organizations are often among the first to meet the needs of those struggling in transit, including in the provision of health care. Their core belief in the sanctity of life and opposition to abortion must be respected and protected if abortion is included as a component of “sexual and reproductive health-care services” for women and girls who are migrants or refugees.

Conclusion

Priests for Life believes that respect for the right to life is the foundation of human rights and affirms that respect for the intrinsic dignity and worth of every human being through all stages of life from conception to natural death ought to be the justification for policies and programmes developed to respond to mass movements of people. At all times, the human dignity of every human being must be upheld, despite migration or immigration status.



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Statement submitted by Islamic Research and Information Artistic & Cultural Institute, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council²

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Statement

Religious Culture and urbanization and migration

Urbanization and migration are profoundly important demographic phenomena. The two processes have significant development impacts at the global, regional, national and sub-national levels, and they are closely interconnected.

Analysing the development impacts of the trends in urbanization and migration can help to identify implications for policy, governance and planning.

People affect civilizational accomplishment in different ways. They also benefit from valuable civilizational achievements.

Recent studies of transnational religious phenomena have emphasized the importance of distinguishing between transnational processes of migration and movement on one hand, and diasporic forms of consciousness, identity, and cultural creation on the other. While this distinction is useful, it risks directing the study of transnational social phenomena in certain limited directions. Migration and diaspora insufficiently take into account the possibility of distinct self-understandings about boundaries and legitimacy on the part of both "host" countries and "immigrant" populations.

Transnational Islam creates and implies the existence and legitimacy of a global public space of normative reference and debate, and that this public space cannot be reduced to a dimension of migration or of transnational religious movements.

The immigration of Muslims to Western countries developed and increased in the previous century and continued in the twenty-first century.

Transnational Islam creates and implies the existence and legitimacy of a global public space of normative reference and debate. This public space cannot be reduced to a dimension of migration or of transnational religious movements.

Western countries define Islam within their national, political and cultural boundaries on the one hand, and on the other hand Muslim intellectuals try to maintain the transnational legitimacy of Islamic knowledge.

Some of the underlying societal qualities and features of Islam, such as commitment to the established cause, justice, equality, and mutual understanding and cooperation, have been manifested as early as the exercise of determining the site of the first urban component in the city of Madinah, the Prophet's mosque, and during the marking of its boundaries.

The Prophet's structure of personality and community-building, as an integral part of urban development, reached its climax when he proposed the system of mu'akhah (brotherly association) among the Migrants (Muhajirs) from Makkah and Helpers (Ansar) from Madinah.

Shortly after arriving in Madinah, the Prophet also promoted the interaction between the various inhabitants of Madinah and recorded it in a document, the Constitution of Madinah. The commitments of each group within Madinah and its rights and duties were comprehensively enshrined in the document. The society of Madinah was founded and was set to progress based on commitment, love, mutual understanding, cooperation and support.

It is important to identify ways in which Islam in a Western context can be considered transnational. One should explore how the question of living as a Muslim in the West is being addressed in the context of transnationalism and consider whether there is an emergent "Western Islam" or "Western Muslim" identity. The United Nation should take into consideration the problems and prospects for Islam in Western public spheres.



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Statement submitted by International Planned Parenthood Federation, a non-governmental organization in general consultative status with the Economic and Social Council²

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Statement

Sustainable cities, human mobility and international migration

The International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) welcomes the special theme of the fifty-first session of the Commission on Population and Development. As a leading advocate of sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and a global service provider, IPPF works through 152 Member Associations and Collaborating Partners in 172 countries to empower the most vulnerable women, men and young people, in all their diversity, to access life-saving services and programmes, and to live with dignity. The organization has the general consultative status with the Economic and Social Council since 1973 (E/2010/INF/4).

(B) Introduction

Globally, some organizations have estimated the number of internal migrants at 76 million and the United Nations is estimating the number of international migrants at 244 million, of which over half are women. One in seven people work or live away from their habitual place of residence. People migrate for a number of reasons, from social, economic, conflict and climate change. Forced migration which has been fuelled by conflict and climate change has displaced more than 60 million people.

Increased migration, both forced and voluntary, over the last few decades has been a key driver of rapid urbanization, with the majority of fast-growing countries being located in Africa and Asia. Urbanization rates differ across regions and countries with various levels of development, and context-specific policies and interventions are needed to overcome the challenges of (rapid) urbanization.

Migrants are key agents of change, yet they face particular barriers in accessing healthcare services, including comprehensive sexual and reproductive health care and in realizing their sexual and reproductive rights. Migrants are some of the most marginalized and vulnerable members of society, and there is growing international recognition of the unique challenges for the health of migrants as demonstrated by the sixty-first World Health Assembly Resolution which included "Health of Migrants" in 2008 and is currently under review for update.

Migration is a gendered issue. Women migrant workers are more likely to be over-represented in the informal and/or care sector such as domestic work, agricultural, manufacturing and sex work. Migrant and immigrant women are often forced into the informal sector as a result of their migration status, where the lack of regulations makes them more vulnerable to lower wages and workplace discrimination and abuse, including sexual assault. They are also less likely to be able to access health care, let alone maternity leave or child care. If we are to achieve gender equality and universal access to sexual and reproductive health rights, as outlined in Sustainable Development Goals 3 and 5, the poorest and most marginalized women and girls cannot be left behind.

For migrant women, existing gender inequalities and barriers in accessing sexual and reproductive health and rights are compounded by living in an unfamiliar place with no social network and they often face language barriers. These barriers include but are not limited to: scarce availability of comprehensive, high quality sexual and reproductive health information, education, services and supplies; barriers to accessing health care services related to residency rights, education and other social services; vulnerability to sexual and gender based violence and harmful traditional practices; and a disproportionate impact by the gendered impacts of climate change and humanitarian disasters. Situations of crisis exacerbate pre-existing gender inequalities.

The experiences of internal and international migrants are contextual and will differ based on their gender, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, ability, sexual orientation and gender identity. It is especially important to consider the needs of young migrants and particularly young girls in urban settings. Young migrants face increased vulnerabilities due to their age and economic dependence. Access to education, including comprehensive sexuality education, is critical for girls' personal development, empowerment, and the ability make their own choices about their futures and their families, all essential for strong communities and sustainable development.

(C) Urbanization and sexual and reproductive health and rights

Poverty is a key driver of rural-urban migration and any policies addressing rural-urban migration should consider strategies to combat rural poverty. Urban poverty and inequalities are characterized by people living in informal settlements (slums), working in informal, unregulated and unsafe conditions, and being exposed to poor quality and overcrowded housing, risk of forceful eviction, lack of safe, reliable water supplies, poor provision of sanitation, drainage, sewage and solid waste collection, pollution, lack of access to health services and education, high rates of crime and violence, and high risk of (natural) disasters such as floods and landslides. All of these factors can exacerbate vulnerabilities for women and girls to sexual and gender based violence.

Increased HIV vulnerability in urban areas can be related to a high concentration of people with serious health problems and inconsistent lack of access to health services such as treatment and testing and immune systems already compromised by malnutrition. The feminization of poverty is also characteristic of urban areas, with a large number of women-headed households in urban slums and informal settlements. Fulfilling the sexual and reproductive health and rights of a fast-growing urban population is a challenge, particularly in meeting the particular needs of adolescents, women and girls living in vulnerable situations or marginalized conditions in urban settings. As a result, these groups are more vulnerable to HIV transmission as well as other sexually transmitted infections, adolescent and unplanned pregnancies, unsafe abortions, and maternal mortality and morbidity.

(D) The sexual and reproductive health and rights of migrants

The intersections of gender, health and rights have significant effects on women and girls within the context of migration. Almost half of all international migrants are women and girls, and they risk being exposed to sexual and gender-based violence and discrimination. Migrants and refugees face particular challenges and violations of their sexual and reproductive health and rights, including limited access to sexual and reproductive health services including family planning and modern methods of contraception, as well as higher rates of child, early and forced marriage, and transmission of HIV infection as well as other sexually transmitted infections. Barriers for migrants accessing comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services include restrictive and discriminatory legal frameworks, language barriers, as well as a lack of awareness of their health rights. Migrants' sexual and reproductive health and rights need to be respected, protected and fulfilled. Policies, programmes and investments are required and should be tailored to the specific context in which international migrants are placed and should ensure access to:

- sexual and reproductive health information and education, including comprehensive sexuality education;
- a comprehensive package of sexual and reproductive health services, including commodities such as a wide range of modern contraceptive methods, emergency

contraceptives, STI and HIV services (information, counselling, treatment and prevention), maternal health services as well as safe abortion services.

Around the world, migrants' human rights are often violated. For instance, some countries have compulsory health, HIV or pregnancy testing as part of application or renewal of (work) permits and visas, or upon arrival, which violates the human rights of migrants to privacy and confidentiality.

Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) is both a driver and of human trafficking and a tool to manipulate and control women, men and young persons into sex work and forced labour across all forms of trafficking. Evidence suggests that GBV is a driver in women and girls' vulnerability to being trafficked. Women and girls account for 71 per cent of all victims of trafficking. Many of the factors that make women vulnerable to SGBV, are similar to the root causes of human trafficking and serve as push factors for women and girls' escape from their homes and into the world of traffickers and exploitation.

Sexual and gender-based violence is a serious, life-threatening global problem, under reported in all contexts. Gender norms and unequal power relations are root causes of sexual and gender-based violence. Acts of SGBV occur in both public and private spheres, although most acts are perpetrated by someone known to the survivor. This can include person in authority. Persons in migration are reliant on informal networks which can increase vulnerability to SGBV.

(E) Conclusions

To meet SDG 11 — make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable — the sexual and reproductive health and rights of all migrants, in all their diversity, must be protected. Policies must recognise migrant women, in all their diversity, as active agents in the development of sustainable cities, entitled to their full human rights, including access to sexual and reproductive health and rights. Migration status, whether internal or international, is still too often a factor leading to exclusion from social services, and face discrimination on the basis of their migration status. Investments in the diverse needs of internal and international migrants, particularly taking into account gender, age and other characteristics, are needed in order to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

(F) Recommendations

- (i) Prioritize women's universal human rights especially their sexual and reproductive health and rights, in order to strengthen the sustainability of global cities and contribute to the wellbeing of migrant women worldwide. Ultimately, migration issues must be structurally addressed through jus global socioeconomic policies that enhance sustainable development, and make migration a choice rather than a necessity.
- (ii) Governments must ensure access to the full range of comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services, supplies, information and education for migrants, at all stages of the migration cycle. Governments from origin and destination countries must work together with civil society and other stakeholders in creating an enabling environment for migrant workers to make meaningful choices regarding their body and sexuality, and to fully exercise their sexual and reproductive health and rights.
- (iii) Governments and multilateral institutions, including UN agencies, must invest in targeted disaggregated data collection methods among internal and international migrants to fill existing data gaps (recognizing that regular methods of data collection such as Demographic Health Surveys and national household surveys often do not

include migrants), the data should also be disaggregated by gender, age, ethnicity, locality and ability.

(iv) Prevent and eliminate all forms of trafficking of persons, including migrant workers, and in particular the forced labour, sexual exploitation, violence or sexual abuse of girls and women.

(v) Governments must ensure policies and programmes to promote women's leadership and to address existing and new risk factors for gender-based violence against women — including sexual gender-based violence within the context of disaster risk reduction and climate resilience planning in rural areas.



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**General Debate 3 (a): Actions for the further implementation
of the Programme of Action of the International Conference
on Population and Development at the global, regional
and national levels**

3 (b): Sustainable cities, human mobility and international migration

Statement submitted by People of Good Heart, a non-intergovernmental organization in special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council²

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

¹ E/CN.9/2018/1.

² The present statement is issued without formal editing.



Statement

Sustainable cities, human mobility and international migration

Globally, countries depend on one another for growth, development and sustainability. No country is an island on its own. Countries are greater than each other in terms of technology, industries and development.

To maintain trade equilibrium and even development of a country's international trade, mobility of people from one country to another is inevitable. Therefore, human mobility and international migration play a very vital role in development.

In general terms, migration can be defined as the movement of people from one place to another. It may be movement from rural areas to urban areas or in some cases, movement from urban areas to rural areas.

In most cases, movement of rural areas to urban areas is very prominent. Human mobility is very essential and inevitable for self-development and growth. People move from one place to another in search of better opportunities.

International migration, that is, movement of people from one country to another country is very prominent and ideal for the growth of the country.

According to Rousseau in his "discovery of the community" "the body politic, is also a moral being possessed of a will, and this general will, which tends always to the preservation and welfare of the whole and of every part, and is the source of the laws, constitutes for all the members of the state, and to it, the rule of what is just and unjust ...",

W.W. Rostow argues that for development to occur, there must be a "big-push" factor which in most cases does not originate in a country, but comes from outside the country.

Cities, human mobility, and international migration therefore, play a very crucial role in the development of a country.

Internally, people do migrate from the rural areas to the urban areas in search of opportunities, in particular "white-collar jobs" which until now are often not available in the rural areas. As a consequence, urban areas become congested and some people who migrate to cities, do not succeed and become part of the "urban poor".

Internationally, people often move from one country to another in search of better opportunities which cannot be obtained in their home country.

The question is how to manage this mobility and international migration, knowing fully well that mobility and migration is inevitable.

The answer to this is that people move from one place to another for survival. For example, in Nigeria the Fulani Herdsmen move from the North to the South, to the East, looking for grass to graze their cattle. People move from all regions of the country to Lagos and Abuja for employment which in some cases is not available.

Internationally, people move from developing countries to developed countries in search of greater opportunities, often linked to economic opportunities.

In some cases, people migrate from one country to another as part of a diplomatic representation. As said earlier no country is an island on its own. Hence the need for international responses, international trade, and international co-existence.

Be that as it may, how do we sustain cities-human mobility and international migration?

(a) Balance of trade: countries do trade with each other. For example, Nigeria trades with the United Kingdom and the United States of America. There is a need for a trade balance between the two countries and the exchange rate should be clearly defined and strictly followed.

(b) Technology transfer: people from especially developing countries, usually migrate to developed countries for knowledge and ideas, which properly digested, can lead to technological development of their country. To sustain international migration this knowledge should be made available to encourage other countries and individuals to patronize or visit the country to gather knowledge.

(c) Security: Security, urban mobility and international migration, play a fundamental role in cities. International security organizations have a very vital role in this regard.

The movement of the people to and from any countries should be properly regulated to ensure that no dangerous weapons or illegal substances are carried into countries of transit or host countries.

(d) Trade Regulation: the terms of trade between two countries should be properly established and any contravention should attract the maximum penalty as indicated in the terms of trade.

(e) Migration Laws: laws guiding the movement of people into and outside the country should be properly defined.

Overall, migration should be managed and proper travel documentation must be obtained by migrants.

(f) Public Awareness: immigrants should be educated regarding the laws of the host country so they do not break the rules and regulations of the host country.

In case of cities and human mobility, governments should ensure that necessary infrastructure is provided both in the urban and rural areas. This will reduce the migration from rural to urban areas and ensure that people in the urban areas are well catered for through the provision of industries, generation of employment, good roads, and all other facilities that will cater for the welfare of the people.